

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4975

C O N F I D E N T I A L SANTIAGO 4343

FOR ACTING ASSISTANT SECRETARY LUERK FROM CHARGE

E.O. 11652: XGDS-4

TAGS: PFOR SHUM OVIP (FREI) CI

SUBJECT: DEPUTY SECRETARY'S MEETING WITH CHILEAN AMBASSADOR

REF: A) STATE 120393; B) SANTIAGO 4103

1. SANTIAGO 4319 CONTAINS OUR RECOMMENDATIONS WITH RESPECT TO DEPUTY SECRETARY CHRISTOPHER'S TALKING POINTS FOR HIS MEETING WITH CHILEAN AMBASSADOR CAUAS. THIS CABLE PROVIDES A QUICK UPDATE ON THE HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION.

2. THE BASIC FACTORS REPORTED IN REF (B) STAND: DISAPPEARANCES, ILLEGAL DETENTIONS AND MISTREATMENT OF DETAINED PERSONS OCCURRED DURING AT LEAST A THREE-WEEK PERIOD IN APRIL-MAY. PERSONS DETAINED THEN ARE STILL BEING HELD ILLEGALLY. AS OF MAY 25, THERE HAD BEEN NO REPORTS OF NEW DETENTIONS FOR ABOUT TEN DAYS.

3. IN THE PAST FEW DAYS THE OFFICIAL OR INSPIRED PRESS HAS PUBLISHED STORIES OF THE APPEARANCE OF SEVERAL RECENTLY PRESUMED DISAPPEARED PERSONS WITH THE OBVIOUS AIM OF DISCREDITING THE CATHOLIC CHURCH'S VICARIATE OF SOLIDARITY, WHICH HAS DISSEMINATED DETAILS OF

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VARIOUS VIOLATIONS. MOREOVER, THE GOC MAINTAINS THAT A FEW, ASSOCIATED WITH THE VICARIATE'S LABOR PROGRAM, THEMSELVES HAD KIDNAPPED ANOTHER PERSON (A MINOR) LISTED BY THE VICARIATE AS TORTURED (PARA SIX REF B), AND STATES THAT THE FORMER ARE IN CUSTODY. THE CHURCH IS REPLYING VIGOROUSLY AND NOTING THE MANY HOLES IN THE GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTS.

4. CAUAS WILL PROBABLY DENY THAT THE APRIL-MAY VIOLATIONS OCCURRED. IF HE IS WELL BRIEFED ON THE LATEST EVENTS IN SANTIAGO, HE MAY GO ON THE ATTACK BY CRITICIZING THE VICARIATE. SOME PERSONS REPORTED BY THE VICARIATE AS HAVING DISAPPEARED IN THE EARLY MAY PERIOD HAVE IN FACT SURFACED. OUR GUESS IS THAT THESE INDIVIDUALS WERE PLANTED BY THE GOVERNMENT.

5. THERE ARE A FEW OTHER DEVELOPMENTS:

(A) ANDRES ZALDIVAR, PRESIDENT OF THE NOW DISSOLVED CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC PARTY, IS FILING LEGAL ACTIONS TO CLARIFY THE BREAK-IN AND MALICIOUS VANDALISM OF HIS OFFICE IN DOWNTOWN SANTIAGO DURING THE WEEKEND OF MAY 21-22. THE LOCAL PRESS REPORTS OFFICIAL SOURCES ARE "SERIOUSLY LOOKING INTO" THE POSSIBILITY THAT THE BREAK-IN WAS STAGED BY THE PDC.

(B) ONE OF THE ALLEGED DISAPPEARED WHO HAS SURFACED IS LAWYER AND JUDICIARY EMPLOYEE BELLO, WHO HAD GOTTEN INTO A SPAT WITH A GOC OFFICIAL IN THE COURSE OF DEFENDING A CLIENT IN AN AUTO ACCIDENT (PARA FIVE, REF B). BELLO ON RETURNING MAY 18 ALLEGED THAT HE COULD NOT REMEMBER WHAT HAD HAPPENED SINCE HIS MAY 3 DISAPPEARANCE. THIS IS REMINISCENT OF THE CASE OF THE BUDNIK BROTHERS, WHO DISAPPEARED FOR SOME WEEKS IN MID-1976 AND ON RETURN REFUSED TO SAY WHERE THEY HAD BEEN (76 SANTIAGO 8652). WE HAVE CONFIDENTIAL

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GOOD REASON TO BELIEVE DINA HAD THEM.

6. IN SUM, IF EVEN FOR A BRIEF PERIOD, DINA WAS NEWLY ACTIVE AND USED THE TECHNIQUES FOR WHICH IT IS WELL KNOWN, WHATEVER THE DETAILS AND DEGREE OF THE RECENT VIOLATIONS, THEY POINT UP THE CAPRICIOUSNESS OF THE EXISTING INSTITUTIONAL STRUCTURE. OUR RECOMMENDATIONS FOR DEPUTY SECRETARY CHRISTOPHER THEREFORE STAND.
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